

THE KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS: THE STORIES OF KENTUCKY

WHAT'S MY STORY?

I ILLUSTRATED A MISGUIDED 19TH CENTURY MEDICAL TREATMENT.

Cave air does not help tuberculosis patients, a tragic lesson Dr. John Croghan learned in the 1840s. Croghan had the misguided belief that TB patients would respond well to underground conditions and purchased Mammoth Cave for his treatment facility. In 1842, as this lithograph illustrates, he had a sanitarium built inside the cave to house 15 people. Soon, he realized that the smoke from the fires and the damp air were killing his patients. Five people died while living in Mammoth Cave. Croghan himself succumbed to TB in 1849.

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